(b) if so, the details of the action plan;

(c) the present status of the refinery project; and

(d) the time-frame within which the capacity of the above unit would be scaled up?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Feasibility of an integrated refinery cum petrochemical complex at Paradip, as against the stand-alone refinery planned earlier, is being examined by Indian Oil Corporation Limited along with a review of the capacity of the refinery to achieve economies of scale and export potential.

(c) and (d) A Detailed Feasibility Report (DFR) is expected to be ready by August, 2005 and the project is expected to be completed by 2009.

LPG users in Uttar Pradesh

4276. SHRI LALIT SURI:
DR. VIJAY MALLYA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of population of Uttar Pradesh presently being served by LPG;

(b) by when entire population in cities and towns with a population up to five thousand and more in the State is likely to be covered by LPG; and

(c) the details of plans formulated by Government oil companies for the years 2005 and 2006 towards achieving the above objective?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) As on 1.1.2005, it is estimated that about 33% of population in Uttar Pradesh was being served by LPG marketed through Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs).

(b) and (c) OMCs have the freedom to set up LPG distributorships based on their commercial assessment of any given location in the country. As the setting up of distributorships is a continuous process, not time limit can be prescribed for covering the entire population of any State. However, Government have advised OMCs to concentrate their future

expansion plans on semi-urban and rural areas and to take innovative steps like opening community kitchens in villages and sale of 5kg cyliners to low-income group customers to increase the supply of LPG in uncovered areas.

Exploration of Gas and Petroleum

†4277. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have reformulated any scheme for the exploration of gas and petroleum in the country;

(b) if so, the names of States where exploration work of gas and petroleum is in progress;

(c) the details of amount spent on the same during the year 2004-05; and

(d) the details of the locations State-wise where success has been achieved in the field of oil and gas?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) In order to offer a level playing field to private. foreign and National Oil Companies(NOCs), the Government of India formulated the New Exploration Licensing Policy(NELP) with attractive fiscal terms. Under four rounds of NELP completed so far, the Government of India have signed Production Sharing Contracts(PSCs) for 90 exploration blocks. In addition, contracts for 16 Coal Bed Methane(CBM) exploration blocks have also been signed. On 4 January 2005, Government announced the fifth round of NELP, under which 20 exploration blocks have been offered for competitive bidding.The details of the blocks are annexed as Statement. (*See* below).The bid closing date is 31 May 2005.

(b) Exploration activities are being carried out in the onland areas of Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Mizoram, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Uttranchal and West Bengal. In addition, exploration efforts are being continued in the shallow and deep water offshore areas of the East and West Coast.

CBM exploration is also being carried out in the States of Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and West Bengal.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.